



Voter Outreach and Education Contract: T02925T

Between Alliance of People with disAbilities and
King County Department of Executive Services



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Voter Outreach and Education Project Report

Purpose of Project

With the passage of the Help America Vote Act in 2002, provisions were put into place to assist states in ensuring that voters with disabilities had “the same opportunity for access and participation (including privacy and independence) as other voters.” This led to the development of the Accessible Voting Units now used in King and Snohomish Counties, as well as general improvements in accessibility of voting. Through this project, the Alliance of People with disAbilities worked collaboratively with King and Snohomish County Elections Divisions, the disAbility Resource Connection (dRC) in Everett and approximately 42 other community partners to engage in outreach work educating the disability community about the availability of accessible voting options.

Outreach focused on 1) making sure as many people as possible knew about accessible voting options; 2) providing people an opportunity to try the AVU and learn about its features; 3) registering people to vote; 4) informing people of the availability of early voting and ballot drop boxes; and 5) developing and making available alternate formats of voting material to people who need it. While the target audience for this project was the disability community, general outreach was also done since many people with disabilities do not necessarily associate with the disability community and/or show no physical signs of having a disability. Also, even if people do not have a disability themselves, they often have a friend or family member with a disability.

In educating the public about the Accessible Voting Units (AVUs), it was wonderful to see the smiles emerging on people’s faces when they realized they would be able to vote an independent and private ballot for the first time in their lives. One woman with low-vision at Lighthouse for the Blind was so excited to be able to vote independently that she eagerly told the Outreach Coordinator, “I can finally vote [independently]. Give me a voter registration form. I’m going down to King County Elections Department to register to vote. I am going to vote for my president.” It was moments like this that captured the true intent of this project.

Project Components

Staffing/Volunteer Recruitment

All staff and a number of Alliance volunteers participated in accessible voting outreach work. A private contractor was hired to work full-time throughout the duration of the project to lead the King County outreach effort. A sub-contract was established with the disAbility Resource Connection in Everett to organize outreach efforts in Snohomish County.

Volunteers were primarily recruited from people already connected with the Alliance in some way. They assisted with Bumbershoot, phone calling, and material distribution. Bumbershoot is a three day music festival at which the Alliance had a booth with the AVU, voting information and other agency information. Volunteers were particularly helpful with voter registration at the festival. Volunteers were also recruited later on to assist with phone calling projects in which Alliance contacts were reminded about voter registration deadlines, availability of the AVU, early voting, ballot drop boxes, audio voter pamphlets, rides to polls, and, of course, about actually going out to vote. Other volunteers distributed AVU outreach materials in the community.

A more simple and private process...

"Before, I'd have to go into the polling place and have someone go into the booth with me. Generally it was...someone that was older and had a hard time reading. It was a slow process. You had to take a stylus and poke it to the holes in the paper. You didn't have any privacy. They would announce when you got out, 'Bob Smith' has voted.' Announce it to the whole room and I never liked that. I always felt conscious of it. It was very uncomfortable. This time the lady just gave me the headphones and showed me the machine."

Training

All staff and contractors were trained by either King County Election's staff or Snohomish County Election's staff on proper procedures for voter registration and AVU use. The training on the AVU included information on casting a ballot, accessibility features, and set-up and take-down of the machine. There were practice opportunities with the AVU for all involved. The King County training was held on August 21, 2008. The Snohomish County Training was held on September 30, 2008. Staff members who could not participate on those days were trained by Alliance's Voting Outreach Coordinator or by previously trained dRC staff.

Development of Presentation

To assist the Voting Outreach Coordinator in developing strategies for teaching people how to use the AVU, she met with staff and students at the Department of Services for the Blind on September 3, 2008. She reviewed the machine with them and they gave her suggestions for how she might present the machine to people who are blind or low-vision. That served as the basis for how instruction was provided on the machine at future events. Additional feedback was obtained throughout the project and the presentation of the machine evolved as new ideas emerged.

Outreach and Education Meetings

Participating in outreach and education meetings or events was one of the key focus areas of this project. Through hands-on demonstrations and personalized instruction to individuals and small groups, people's questions and concerns about the machine could be addressed.

Arranging Outreach Meetings/Events

To initiate these and other types of outreach opportunities, the Alliance sent an email announcement out to 148 contacts within the disability community letting them know of the availability of AVU demonstrations and inviting them to partner with us in increasing awareness about accessible voting. Different possibilities for how we could work together were described, including having the Alliance bring the AVU to an organization's event or displaying it in their lobby or other setting of their choice. The Alliance also informed agencies of its interest to post an advertisement in their agency newsletter and

asked agencies to share information on this project with others who may be interested in becoming involved. Follow-up contacts were made to these same organizations, as needed.

The Alliance engaged in additional research about other events it could attend or locations that may be strategic to take the AVU. This was done through the internet, by talking with community contacts, and using resource information at the Alliance. A number of hospitals, local housing authorities, vocational rehabilitation offices, and libraries were also contacted.

In Snohomish County, the majority of locations used were libraries, being that they are central community gathering points. dRC staff also worked with several rehabilitation sites and the Arc of Snohomish County on hosting of events.

Through the contacts made, a schedule of events to be held throughout King and Snohomish Counties was set. It included events at which the Alliance or dRC had a booth, classes being held in the community, organizational meetings, and sometimes the AVU was set up in the lobby of a non-profit, government agency, hospital, nursing facility or library during their business hours. The Alliance set a schedule for having the AVU at each of its own offices on a rotating basis – that allowed for having one AVU to take to events and one to remain at an Alliance office for most of the duration of the project. dRC was also provided two AVUs, with one being kept in its office for demonstrations and the other being taken to events.

Attracting Attention

At events and demonstrations, the Voting Outreach Coordinator wore a plastic top hat with sparkling red, silver, and blue glitter to attract attention. She also wore a shirt that said “Your Vote Matters for People with disAbilities” and “Alliance of People with disAbilities” and five buttons: “iVote”, “Express Yourself – Vote” (in both English and Chinese), “Your Vote Matters for People with disAbilities,” and “A Voting American with disAbilities”. Large signs were displayed at King County events that said “Try King County’s Accessible Voting Machine Here!” Smaller signs were put up in the surrounding area with the same message, but with arrows guiding people to the location of the machine. As raffles always seem to draw people’s attention, a raffle was established in which those who tried the machine could have a chance to win either a Fred Meyer gift card (\$25) or a Starbucks gift card (\$25).

In crowded surroundings, with a lot of foot traffic where there was little time to grab someone’s attention, the Voting Outreach Coordinator would quickly ask passers-by if they wanted to vote an example or test ballot. This often caused people to pause long enough for the Coordinator to further explain that she was providing demonstrations of King County Election’s Accessible Voting Unit. Then, she would ask if they would like to see “the six



second demo". Most accepted. Many stayed beyond "six seconds" because they realized either: they could benefit from using the AVU, they had a relative or friend that might benefit, or they worked with people who could use the machine. In more calm settings, the Voting Outreach Coordinator could start by asking if someone wanted to try the Accessible Voting Machine. Most young people with full vision were familiar enough with computer technology to only need a quick demonstration. In events with bigger crowds or where the AVU was being fit into a tight agenda, the short version of the demonstration was also more frequently used. At events dedicated to solely demonstrating the AVU, people tended to vote the entire ballot.

Customized Learning

Each presentation or demonstration was tailored to an individual's learning style, the time available, and the person's attention span. Outreach Coordinators in both King and Snohomish Counties mentioned learning a lot about teaching people with various disabilities and learning styles how to use the machine. The Coordinators let those trying the machine tell them how they learned best. Whenever possible, people were encouraged to practice making perceived mistakes to demonstrate how easy it is to make corrections. For people who were anxious about trying the machine, additional assurance and hands-on assistance was provided.

Achieving a sense of inclusion...

I was very excited my first time out voting, but I remember it wasn't an enjoyable experience for me. I just wanted it to be over...The poll worker read out very loudly each item that I was to vote on and then I whispered to them which one I wanted to do. It made me extremely uncomfortable. Pretty soon after, I started with the absentee ballots...I felt more independence being able to do that. What I really like about the Accessible Voting machine is that it allows for anonymity and independence but also a sense of inclusion. I actually wasn't going to use the [AVU] but I felt I needed to do so to support accessible voting. I felt a sense of inclusion that I wasn't expecting...This was my first time ever voting on a voting machine by myself alongside everyone else. There was this real sense in casting my vote that I'm taking part in this democracy, I'm participating right alongside everyone else...I don't need to announce to everyone that I'm starting to vote or that I'm done voting. That was a sense of empowerment that I wasn't expecting...All of a sudden you feel like you're part of the process in a way that you weren't a part of it before. ~ focus group member

Outreach to Blind/Low-vision Community

The AVU was demonstrated to a number of groups or organizations composed of people who are blind or have low-vision. This included: Lighthouse for the Blind, Washington Talking Book & Braille Library, Deaf-Blind Service Center, Department of Services for the Blind, and United Blind of Seattle. Lighthouse for the Blind scheduled three days of demonstrations in two different areas of their facility. Approximately 45 people tried the AVU either individually or in small groups. Staff was allowed to take breaks from their work to try the machine.

Some of the events at these locations started with classes on the AVU in which everyone received general instructions and listened while a group representative was the proxy voter. The Voting Outreach Coordinator worked with that individual and with the AVU voice being played over a speaker to teach the class. As the designated voter was working through the ballot, the coordinator described the buttons that person was using, with a focus on the key buttons: "6 to advance, 4 to go back, and 5 to vote/select or deselect." People were also taught how to "run into the wall" of an AVU ballot. Since people who are blind often navigate by

finding walls with their white canes, it can be helpful to have a virtual wall to use as a reference. In this case, the last candidate in a section is always a write-in candidate. And, if you cycle past the last candidate and have not voted, the system will ask you if you meant to under-vote or not. All of this provides a “wall”, of sorts, which can serve as a frame of reference for people who are blind and let them know which section of the ballot they are on and when they have reached the end of that section. At the end of any class, individual instruction and testing was available for those who wanted to try.

Creation and Distribution of Materials

Informational material on accessible voting, ballot-drop boxes, and early voting was created, printed and/or distributed to support the work of this project. Much of the material used derived from the King County 2006 DAVE project (The Disabled Accessible Voting Equipment Project). Some of it only needed to be re-printed or to have simple updates done and then be re-printed. Other previously used materials were the basis for new materials. As much as possible, both King and Snohomish County Elections offices were listed on outreach material as resources and partners in this project.

“When the technology was demonstrated to me, it looked really very doable. I didn't think I was missing independent voting but now that I had the chance to try it, I really wanted to do it...I think the technology is awesome.” ~Rhonda, Focus Group

Materials used with this project included:

- A flyer with frequently asked questions on the Accessible Voting Unit (updated from DAVE project and re-printed). See Attachment B (standard print), Attachment C (high contrast), Attachment D (Braille), and Attachment E (large print).
- A flyer with frequently asked questions about Ballot Drop Boxes created by King County Elections (re-printed)
- A flyer with ballot drop-off locations created by King County Elections (re-printed)
- A packet of information on accessible voting that was created to be mailed out to those on Alliance's mailing list. It included a letter encouraging people with disabilities to vote, information on Alliance's AVU demonstrations, the flyers mentioned above, a step-by-step guide to using the AVU, and a list of different ways people can vote in King County (see Attachment H)
- Buttons previously created and printed by the Alliance which stated: “A Voting American with disAbilities” and “Your Vote Matters for People with disAbilities”
- “iVote” buttons created during DAVE project (re-printed)
- Voter registration forms in assorted languages, including Braille, Vietnamese, Laotian, Russian, Korean, Cambodian, Chinese, Spanish and English (obtained from the Secretary of State and from the King County Elections Department).

These materials were taken to outreach events and shared with those testing the AVU. They were also posted or left for people to take in key locations throughout the community (e.g. Steven's Hospital, Worksource, Division of Developmental Disabilities, Lighthouse for the Blind, etc.). Many of them were added to the Alliance's website (see Attachment M). An email reminder was sent to Alliance contacts in the week leading up to the election with the key points from this project. It included links to the Alliance website, the King County Elections website and the Snohomish County Elections website where more detailed information could be found.

Materials were put into a variety of formats, including Braille, large print, electronic format, high contrast, and audio (for samples of these see Attachments B through E). People on Alliance mailing lists who have requested alternate formats were sent the same information as others,

but in the format they have requested. Alternate formats were also made available to various community organizations, a number of which serve people who are blind or low-vision. Audio tapes of the voter's pamphlet provided by the King County Elections office were distributed to Alliance contacts who it knows to prefer that format of communication. Leading up to the election, the Alliance also called about 700 people who have received Alliance services and informed them about the availability of the voter's pamphlet in audio format, as well as sharing other key election information.

Accommodations

For any event held by the Alliance, accommodations can be requested and will be provided. In scheduling events, the Alliance notified other agencies that accommodations could be provided, if needed. The Alliance ended up arranging ASL, tactile ASL, Mandarin, Tagalog, and Spanish interpreters (the Alliance paid for the latter two on its own since interpreters for those languages are not covered through this grant). Alternate formats of materials were provided to anyone who requested them.

Voter Registration Efforts

Voter registration was integrated into almost all project activities. About 40 people were registered to vote and others took forms with them to complete at home. Registration forms were taken to all events and one of the first questions asked of people at events was if they were registered to vote or if they were a registered voter who had moved recently. If they were not registered or if they had moved recently, they were asked if they would like to register to vote or do an update to their voter registration. Bumbershoot was perhaps the event in which the most activity occurred related to voter registration. Several of the volunteers were particularly interested in this area and took the initiative to go into the crowd around Alliance's booth and see if anyone wanted to register to vote.

Leading up to the cut-off date for doing voter registration by mail or online, the Alliance called people it has served and let them know about the upcoming deadline and encouraged them to register to vote. One person that the Alliance registered to vote came back in on Election Day and asked the Voting Outreach Coordinator to go with him to the polling location down the hall from the Alliance office to assist him in completing a provisional ballot. Two days later this person was still wearing his "I Voted." sticker because, as he said, "I think people should know that I voted."

As an ongoing practice, the Alliance maintains reminders to register to vote on its voicemail system and at the end of staff email messages. Staff also asks those calling or walking into the Alliance office if they would like to register to vote.

Other promotional work and outreach related to accessible voting

In addition to community events, the Alliance used a number of other methods to educate the public about accessible voting. Thanks to a generous in-kind donation from Bluline Media and a collaborative effort with King County elections, an advertisement related to the AVUs was posted in 500 King County buses during the time period of September 8, 2008 to November 2, 2008 (eight weeks). See Attachment N. A notice about accessible voting was also put into the community section of craigslist.com. Alliance's website served as another online tool for communicating information covered in this project to the public.

One of the Alliance's goals was to utilize the media to educate the public about accessible voting. Some attempts were made to contact the press about the AVUs, but this is one of

several areas that the Alliance would have liked to pursue further. Two reporters expressed interest in the issue, but this did not lead to stories. Initial drafts were created for press releases and PSAs, but due to time constraints, the Alliance was not able to complete them far enough in advance of Election Day to be effective. One success was that thanks to a referral from King County Election's staff, a reporter from the Seattle Post-Intelligencer who was doing a story on accessible voting spoke with a staff member at the Alliance to obtain information for his story. The story was published on Election Day. A picture of Alliance's Voting Outreach Coordinator also appeared in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer online. The picture showed her in her sparkling hat at a local debate where she had been demonstrating the AVU. Some news stories were done about accessible voting, even if not as a result of the work of the Alliance. At an event at the Burien Library on October 28, 2008, a library patron said he had read two articles in the past week about accessible voting and did not need to see the demonstration because he did not have accessibility issues. He tried the AVU, anyway, and was delighted by how easy it was to use.

Another component of Alliance's outreach effort was mailings, emails, and calls to Alliance contacts. This included individuals served by the Alliance, contacts at other disability organizations, people with disabilities (who have not received services, but are interested in our organization), family members and friends of people with disabilities, as well as donors. About 1,700 people received the mailing shown in Attachment H. Just over 600 people received an email with information on accessible voting (Attachment J) and a second email with information specific to people with disabilities obtaining free rides to the polls (Attachment K). Two rounds of phone calls were completed to approximately 800 people.

Collaboration with King County Elections

Staff regularly participated in conference calls with the King County Elections Department and informed them about events being scheduled by the Alliance. When possible, Snohomish County Elections staff was incorporated into meetings or other communications. This gave Elections staff an opportunity to provide input into activities and to learn about events they may have been interested in attending. Consultation was also done with King and Snohomish County Elections when questions arose to which staff or the Voting Outreach Coordinator was unsure of an answer. Then, if relevant, follow-up was done with the community member who had the question. An example of such a question was what to do if someone was registered to vote by mail, but wanted to use the AVU.

Results/Outcomes

The majority of people encountered during outreach events were unaware of the availability of Accessible Voting Units. Through this collaborative project, the Alliance had the opportunity to work with 45 different community partners, including the King and Snohomish County Elections offices, to educate people about the machines. The table below describes the types of groups with which the Alliance partnered for this project:

Community Partners by Type	#
Disability groups/organizations	12
Government offices (including King & Snohomish County Elections offices)	4
Hospitals	2
Libraries	7
Political groups	7
Rehabilitation Centers/Nursing Facilities/Assisted Living Facilities	4
Senior Centers	2
Other non-profits	6
Other	1
TOTAL	45

With those groups, 47 events (below) were scheduled to demonstrate the AVU, often with multiple events often being held on the same day. At those events, 155,353 people potentially saw or heard about the machine and 838 people tried it.

Date(s)	Time	Location	Additional Description	Who was/is involved	# Who potentially saw/heard about it	# Who Tried
August 21, 2008	5:00 pm - 8:00 pm	ARC of King County	Voting event	Deb Blakeslee, Alex Herzog, Robert Blumenfeld	15	10
August 30, 2008 – September 1, 2008	11:00 am - 7:00 pm	Bumbershoot	Music Festival, had table at a main entrance of the Center House	Deb Blakeslee, Robert Blumenfeld	150,000	16
September 3, 2008	1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Dept. of Services for the Blind	Demonstration to instructors for the blind. Obtained advice on teaching persons with low or no vision	Deb Blakeslee	4	4
September 11, 2008	1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Dept. of Services for the Blind	Group demonstration to students and staff (with time afterward for individuals)	Deb Blakeslee	13	13
September 12, 2008	9:00 am - 2:00 pm	United Way King County Community Resource Exchange	Event connecting homeless people with the services they need in one place, in one day.	Deb Blakeslee	500	80
September 13, 2008	9:00 am - 3:00 pm	People First Conference, Everett	AVU displayed in location central to conference	Deb Blakeslee	120	40
September 18, 2008	7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	46th Legislative District Democrats	Monthly meeting	Deb Blakeslee	130	4
September 23, 2008	10:00 am - 1:00 pm	Seattle Goodwill	General public and students in Goodwill class	Deb Blakeslee	387	40
September 24, 2008	9:00 am - 10:00 am	Four Freedoms	Retirement center in Shoreline	Deb Blakeslee	30	8

September 28, 2008	4:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Bridge Ministries	Monthly dinner – disability organization	Deb Blakeslee	80	5
September 30, 2008	2:30 pm - 4:00 pm	Kawabe House, Seattle	Retirement Center - Asian population	Deb Blakeslee	50	8
October 1, 2008	10:00 am - 3:00 pm	ARC of King County	Voting event	Deb Blakeslee	50	12
October 2, 2008	6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	Urban Indians of All Nations	Voting event by Native Americans	Deb Blakeslee	70	45
October 6, 2008	11:00 am – 2:00 pm	Provail, 12550 Aurora Ave North, Seattle, WA 98133-8036	AVU displayed at lobby	Deb Blakeslee	38	8
October 7, 2008	11:30 pm – 5:00 pm	North Seattle Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, 12063 15 th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98125	AVU displayed at lobby on day when people usually come in for training.	Deb Blakeslee, Gladys Springborn	44	20
October 7, 2008	7:00 pm - 8:30 pm	Eastside Republican Club Monthly Dinner Meeting, North Bellevue Senior Center - 4063 148th Ave NE, Bellevue	Monthly meeting	Deb Blakeslee	120	5
October 8, 2008	11:30 am - 1:30 pm	8 th Congressional District Debate by City Club at Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue	AVU displayed in lobby	Deb Blakeslee	260	25
October 8, 2008	6:30 pm- 8:30 pm	Statewide Poverty Action Network, Federal Way	Candidates forum	Deb Blakeslee, Robert Blumenfeld	23	3
October 9, 2008	10:00 am - 4:00 pm	WA Talking Book & Braille, Seattle	AVU displayed in lobby	Deb Blakeslee	40	21
October 11, 2008	11:00 am – 4:00 pm	Federal Way Regional Library, 34200 1st Way S, Federal Way, WA 98003	AVU displayed in lobby	Deb Blakeslee	200	86
October 13, 2008	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Attorney General Debate by City Club at Seattle University	AVU displayed in lobby	Deb Blakeslee	250	19

October 14, 2008	11:00 am – 5:00 pm	North Seattle Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, 12063 15 th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98125	AVU displayed in lobby	Deb Blakeslee, Gladys Springborn	23	12
October 14, 2008	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	League of Women Voters and Hearing, Speech and Deafness Center	AVU displayed in meeting room	Deb Blakeslee	10	4
October 15, 2008	12:30 pm - 4:00 pm	Lighthouse for the Blind	Multiple group and individual training sessions for employees and staff	Deb Blakeslee	25	17
October 16, 2008	10:00 am – 5:45 pm	Lighthouse for the Blind	Multiple group and individual training sessions for employees and staff	Deb Blakeslee, Gladys Springborn	12	12
October 16, 2008	7:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Urban League Professions	Voting event	Deb Blakeslee	78	4
October 17, 2008	10:00 am - 6:00 pm	Lighthouse for the Blind	Multiple group and individual training sessions for employees and staff	Deb Blakeslee	10	10
October 17, 2008	11:00 am-1:00 pm	Merry Haven Health Care Center 800 10th St Snohomish WA 98290	AVU displayed in lobby	Janet Johnson & Laurie Nickens	60	8
October 18, 2008	10:30 am - 12:30 pm	United Blind of Seattle	Monthly meeting	Deb Blakeslee	22	3
October 18, 2008	1:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Hydrocephalus Support Group, Swedish Hospital - Cherry Hill Campus, Seattle	Monthly meeting	Deb Blakeslee	4	4

October 20, 2008	7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	33rd Legislative District Democrats Meeting, Normandy Park Congregational Church, 19247 First Avenue S, Burien	Monthly meeting	Deb Blakeslee	48	6
October 21, 2008	11:30 am – 1:00 pm	Wallingford Senior Ctr, 4649 Sunnyside Ave N, Ste 140, Seattle, WA 98103	AVU displayed in lobby during weekly community lunch	Gladys Springborn	40	15
October 21, 2008	11:00 am – 1:00 pm	Mt. Si Senior Center, North Bend	AVU displayed in cafeteria facilities	Deb Blakeslee	21	10
October 21, 2008	7:00 pm – 9:00 pm	11th Legislative District Democrats Meeting, VFW Hall, 416 Burnett Ave S, Renton	Monthly meeting	Alex Herzog	30	2
October 22, 2008	5:00 pm - 8:30 pm	Deaf-Blind Service Center Meeting related to voting held at Seattle Central Community College	AVU displayed in lobby	Deb Blakeslee	110	12
October 23, 2008	3:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Alliance Transition Club	Club for teens and young adults with disabilities	Deb Blakeslee	4	2
October 23, 2008	12:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Monroe Library 1070 Village Way, Monroe WA 98272	AVU displayed in lobby	Janet Johnson & Laurie Nickens	75	10
October 24, 2008	10:00 am - 2:00 pm	Veteran's Administration Hospital	AVU displayed in one of the lobbies	Deb Blakeslee	500	108
October 24, 2008	3:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Arlington Library, 135 N. Washington Ave, Arlington WA 98223	AVU displayed in lobby	Janet Johnson	70	10
October 25, 2008	10:00 am - 3:00 pm	WA State Deaf-Blind Citizens Member meeting at Center Park	Monthly meeting	Deb Blakeslee	85	8

October 25, 2008	11:00 am – 4:00 pm	Muckleshoot Library, 17102 Southeast 400th Street, Auburn 98092	AVU displayed in lobby	Robert Blumenfeld	5	2
October 27, 2008	1:15 pm - 2:30 pm	Delta Rehabilitation Ctr, 1705 Terrace Ave Snohomish WA 98290	AVU displayed in lobby	Janet Johnson & Laurie Nickens	40	20
October 28, 2008	10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Marysville Library 6120 Grove Street, Marysville, WA 98270	AVU displayed in lobby	Janet Johnson	65	5
October 28, 2008	12:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Burien Public Library	AVU displayed in lobby	Deb Blakeslee	500	55
October 30, 2008	3:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Mountlake Terrace Library, 23300 58th Ave W, Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043	AVU displayed in lobby	Janet Johnson & Laurie Nickens	50	3
October 31, 2008	11:00 am - 2:00 pm	WA Talking Book & Braille Library	AVU displayed in lobby	Deb Blakeslee	30	8
October 31, 2008	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	The Arc of Snohomish County, 2500 Hewitt Ave, Suite 300, Everett, WA 98201	AVU displayed in lobby	Janet Johnson	15	4
October 8-10, 20-24 November 3, 4	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Alliance – Seattle, Good Shepherd Ctr, 4649 Sunnyside Ave N, Ste 100, Seattle	AVU displayed in office	Mary Beth Lum, Robert Blumenfeld, Charity Ranger, Mary Ann DeFrees	542	7
Oct. 12-17, 27- 31, Nov. 4, 2008	9:30 am – 4:30 pm	Alliance – Redmond, Family Resource Ctr, 16315 NE 87 th St, Ste B3, Redmond	AVU displayed in office	Robert Blumenfeld, Messerat Tato	210	5
Oct. 14-16, 20- 23, 27-30, Nov. 3,4, 2008	9:00 am – 4:00 pm	disAbility Resource Connection; 607 SE Everett Mall Way, 6C; Everett	AVU displayed in office/community room; peer groups (men & women)	Janet Johnson, Laurie Nickens, Edwin Delgado	245	30
TOTAL					155,353	838

When taken together with the other outreach work done, a total of 7,159,109 people had an opportunity to learn about accessible voting opportunities and 838 people tried the machine.

	# Who potentially saw/heard about it
Mailing	1,700
Outreach Events and Meetings	155,353 (838 of those tested the machine)
Emails	1,256
Bus advertising	7,000,000
Phone calls	800

Most people were excited about the availability of this technology and there were many powerful moments for people realizing they would now be able to vote independently. Even people who did not need it for themselves were often energized to tell others about the AVU. Some were just glad to know that if they did need it, the technology would be available to them. That included a woman over age 80 who was delighted by the machine, saying “You never know when you might need it in the future. I'm practicing now.” Other exciting moments came when unexpected opportunities arose to let large numbers of people know about the machine, such as at a Goodwill event. Originally, the Outreach Coordinator was just going to show the AVU to a class. Then, it was suggested that she stand outside the main entrance to their store and over 387 people saw the machine.

The range of populations reached by the project was diverse and included:

- People with varying disabilities, including people who are blind or low-vision, people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, people who are deaf/blind, people with developmental disabilities, teens and young adults with disabilities, and people with Hydrocephalus
- Veterans
- People of limited means
- People who are homeless
- African-Americans, Native-Americans, and Asian-Americans
- Seniors
- People living at nursing facilities
- People involved in political parties
- The general public

Full Disclosure – Political Parties

In the case of political parties, a request was originally put to the Alliance to do a presentation at a political event. After consultation with the King County Elections Department and a non-profit legal resource, the Alliance agreed to do the presentation and to let the other active political parties in the county know that the opportunity for an AVU educational event was also available to them. An internet search was done for contact information of political parties. Some parties had outdated contact information (disconnected telephone or invalid e-mail), did not return our communication, or did not have contacts within King County. To the best degree possible, attempts were made to offer this option equally to all parties.

Challenges

Perhaps the biggest challenge for the Alliance with this grant was time. In the original scope of work for this project, activities would have started in June, rather than August. If that had been the case, it is felt that many components of this project could have been more effective. The Alliance acknowledges that a variety of circumstances led to the later start date, including situations within its own organization. Changes in Alliance staff occurred at the same time that contract paperwork was about to be signed. The contract start date had already been delayed for various reasons and this led to the start date being pushed back even further as contract paperwork had to be done anew. By the time the Alliance was able to truly start on the contract, it was mid-August or two and a half months prior to Election Day. Besides its own contract, the Alliance also had to develop two sub-contracts. For the one with dRC, it was mid-September before the contract was signed for them to assist with Snohomish County outreach.

Time became an issue, in particular, with printing of materials. For the AVU Frequently Asked Question flyer, updates had to be agreed upon between the Alliance and King and Snohomish County Elections Departments, and then it had to be translated and finally sent to the printer. It was almost a month from the time the printer was first contacted to when the flyers were returned. The result was that one of the key handouts the Alliance had hoped to use was not available until late October. The Alliance did take photocopied versions of the handout to events so that it had something to share with people. This filled the temporary need, but that also meant that the Alliance received a large volume of high quality flyers near the end of the project. It managed to send some to key locations in the community, but they would have been much more valuable earlier on when the bulk of the outreach work was being completed. The Alliance decided to cancel another printing job (bracelets) when it was given an estimate of one month to have the job completed.

Other areas that the Alliance would have liked to pursue further were advertising, public service announcements, media coverage, and creation of additional outreach materials. Work had to be prioritized and the focus ended up being on outreach events and making personal contacts with the public. It was felt that increasing people's comfort with the AVUs through actual use of the machines was the most effective way to encourage people to use the AVUs on Election Day. Even with the tight timeframe, many positive outcomes resulted from this project; however, for future work, having additional start-up time may be beneficial.

Lessons Learned

This project provided valuable lessons to the Alliance and helped strengthen collaborative relationships with numerous organizations. In demonstrating the machine, some of the most useful lessons came in discovering how to effectively teach people with a range of disabilities to cast a ballot on the machine. For people who were blind or who had low-vision, focusing on the three most commonly used keys on the keypad (or "hot keys", per Keiko Namekata of the Department of Services for the Blind) was useful, as well as teaching people how to "run into the wall" (as described in outreach section to blind and low-vision population). Other teaching strategies that worked well with most people included having people work through "mistakes" (e.g. selecting wrong candidate, under-voting) and demonstrating with the AVU voice over a speaker. That way, the teacher could make comments and provide explanations, while the person testing the machine could also hear what it would be like to complete the ballot using the audio system. Many people in the blind community also appreciated knowing they could choose

an audio only ballot or an audio/text one. The audio only option provides extra privacy measures; the audio/text version makes it easier to have a poll worker provide assistance with a ballot, should there be any questions or issues.

Capturing people's attention when testing an AVU was not on their personal agenda for the day was another challenge for which the Alliance developed various strategies. Efforts included the raffle, wearing the shiny hat, posting large signs, giving away free buttons, and stepping up to people directly (rather than waiting for them to approach the AVU) and asking if they wanted to try voting. The short "six second presentation" was usually offered first so that people who were not inclined to readily give too of their time away might be enticed to stay and learn about the machine. This usually worked.

I wish they could have [AVUs] all over the state. It is such a wonderful technology for everybody to have...I think the most important thing the voting machines do [is] make you feel independent and equal in voting with everybody else." ~Becky, Focus Group

Some members of the deaf-blind community expressed strong concerns that the AVU did not seem accessible to them. The Alliance felt it was important to reach out to this community. It may have been useful to work with Elections staff ahead of time on how to respond to the concerns of this community, though. If it is possible to address deaf-blind voting access issues in future work done by the two counties, that would bring the AVUs that much closer to achieving "Accessible Voting for Everyone."

In similar future efforts, incorporating volunteers into outreach work who have a diverse range of disabilities and have used the machine for actual voting would be beneficial. It would expand outreach capacity and allow for a greater sharing of personal experience with the machine. This was one of the early intentions of the Alliance for this project which was over-shadowed in its efforts to move forward with demonstrations of the machine. Almost all Alliance staff has disabilities and they provided support to the outreach effort, but they also had to maintain their usual job responsibilities. Contacts have been made in doing this project who could make good volunteers and advocates around accessible voting for other projects.

And a simple, but always important lesson: just keep trying! It often took multiple attempts to establish contact with an organization, but usually a connection was eventually made. Sometimes it was a matter of finding the right person with whom to talk that was supportive of the project; sometimes it helped to have a staff member call who was already known to the agency or who was in management (and so was not as easily brushed aside). Hospitals were one of the trickier venues to secure permission for setting up the AVU. At the same time, the outreach event at the Veterans Administration Hospital was one of the most effective events at reaching large numbers of people with disabilities in one setting who wanted to try the machine. Government agencies also tended to require additional work to secure permission for doing demonstrations. The Alliance was able to use pre-existing relationships with staff at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to arrange to show the machine at one of its offices. There were other government offices (e.g. housing authorities) with which the Alliance was almost able to schedule events, but it was not able to finalize arrangements in time for Election Day. Contacting agencies where there is a greater level of bureaucratization as early as possible would be recommended for future projects.

disAbility Resource Connection Feedback

Feedback on the project, including some challenges and lessons learned, was also obtained from the disAbility Resource Connection. They felt that the public reception they received in doing outreach work in Snohomish County was generally very positive. People were interested in knowing more about the AVU and other voting information. A list of their observations and suggestions for future efforts is included below:

Observations

1. Younger people with disabilities asked more questions and tried the machines more than other (older) age groups. There is a possible 'Obama' factor.
2. A good number of participants in this project knew very little about their voting rights or accessibility issues/options. We were amazed at how little people with disabilities know about voting or even the current political climate.
3. A few deaf/deaf-blind/blind people expressed concerns about accessibility of the AVUs via e-mail and on-site visits.
4. Instruction/outreach can be complex and present unique challenges, given the variety of disabilities and learning styles people have. We found the team approach to be more effective at events.
5. Building on collaborative pre-existing relationships with other community partners made the difference in coordinating outreach activities.
6. Getting people interested has been challenging and requires creativity to keep their interests intact. Most participants have shorter attention span – so we had to 'seize' the moment to keep their focus on voting matters.
7. Communication access to deaf/hard-of-hearing/deaf-blind is complex. It is not just about the AVUs, but also utilizing the right disability-specific people to get the word out in their 'native' language and culture.
8. There was limited time & resources to mail/distribute brochures to key sites.
9. There was limited time to work with other agencies to 'market' and plan effectively.
10. Sponsorship beyond HAVA/agency funds for voting outreach is under-utilized.

Future Ideas & Suggestions

1. Have teaching seminars for future instructors, advocates, and community partners before they actually begin outreach. Topics could include:
 - a. Strategies for effectively educating people with different kinds of disabilities on the AVU
 - b. youth & adult learning theory, incorporating real practice
 - c. disability awareness, especially for disabilities that are not as 'common'
 - d. interactive person-to-person marketing, including talking/communication points about accessible voting, the value of voting participation, and use of props to get people's attention
2. Allow more time and coordination in order to better utilize all forms of computer technology to get the word out. For example, interactive pieces on the web (blogging or v-logging) could be used which would open more opportunities for learning and getting people involved as 'advocates'.
3. Recruit specific volunteers/staff who know their specific disability community to reach out more effectively.
4. Use this project as a springboard for other initiatives with community partners. This, in turn, will also make future HAVA projects even better!
5. Set-up DVD's/CD's in ASL and/or with captioning and disseminate them in different ways (e.g., in-person, mailings, etc.). Partner with Hearing, Speech, and Deafness Center and similar groups in assigning those fluent in ASL/sign language to market the AVUs, and voting matters.
6. Explore the possibility of 'third-party' mailings, while working to ensure the privacy of people with disabilities receiving the mailings.
7. Start earlier to allow more preparation time given the challenges that community partners face in addressing community needs. Use existing 'volunteer' resources to assist in recruiting volunteers for outreach purposes.
8. Increase public-private partnership capacities and funding to assist with voting & accessibility awareness efforts and to better support all facets of community inclusion and independent living for people with disabilities.

Focus Groups

Two focus groups were held after the conclusion of the election. One was held at the Good Shepherd Center in Wallingford on November 18, 2008 from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm. The other was held on November 20, 2008 at the Lighthouse of the Blind from 3:15 pm – 4:15 pm and was just open to employees of the Lighthouse, at their request. An email invitation was sent to _____ people inviting them to participate in the focus groups and about another 125 people were called and invited. Those were people for whom the Alliance had obtained contact information as part of the raffle started part way through this project. The Lighthouse sent its own notice about the focus groups to its employees.

These two meetings provided an opportunity to hear what Election Day had been like for people, to obtain feedback on the usefulness of the AVU demonstrations, and to hear more about what people thought of the AVU and accessibility in voting. One additional one-on-one interview was held to hear someone's story of using the AVU on Election Day. Those involved were delighted to participate in a focus group, "It is a neat privilege to be able to share everything...and to be asked all these important questions about voting...Thank you for having time to do this." Another person commented, "I was intrigued that somebody actually wanted to hear what I thought."

A lot of positive comments and experiences were shared. Most people were very thrilled about the opportunity to use the AVU during this past election. Some of the things people liked about the machine included:

- The sense of independence and inclusion it provides (see comments throughout this report).
- It is "clear and precise."
- It lets you change your mind
- The buttons are "great", "intuitive"
- The voice is "really good", "clear"
- Ability to adjust voice (louder/softer and faster/slower)
- The privacy it allows
- How "easy it is to use"
- Ability to adjust the AVU height up and down. That makes it possible to sit and use the machine which helps since it can take awhile to cast a vote on it, particularly if using an audio ballot
- Tilt of the machine made it easy to reach
- Ability to hold the numeric keypad in your hand
- That it was placed in a corner so no one could see what you were doing
- That it eliminates reliance on people who may not agree with you politically to help you vote. For example, according to one person, "the last time I voted absentee my reader said, 'How come you didn't vote for xxx? If you don't vote for xxx, I won't be your reader anymore.'"

"If you're with someone, you're on their schedule. If you want to ask them to read something to you a fourth time (they respond), 'I've already read it to you twice. What is it that you're not getting?' With this, I could play it over as many times as I needed to... When you're going through [a ballot], you want to make sure you're really voting the way you want to vote, so I [listen] for the little words "if", "and", "therefore", "but". I wanted to replay those a few times to make sure that I really understood what initiatives were saying. So the freedom to be able to do that and not be worried was real important to me."
~ focus group member

There were also two people who had been very interested in using the AVU, but were unable to use it due to difficulties at their polling locations. Perhaps these stories may be considered when either educating poll workers about procedures related to AVU use or when educating voters on what they need to do in order to be able to vote on an AVU:

“Abby’s” Story

I was told that I could take my absentee ballot to the polling place and use the accessible voting machine. On the morning of Election Day, I had not gotten a reader to fill out my absentee ballot, so I took a taxi from my house about six blocks to the polling place because I didn't know how to get there exactly on foot. I took a cab figuring it was going to take all of about 10 minutes because that was about how long it used to take me when a poll worker would help me fill out the ballot.

When I arrived, I told them what I wanted to do and gave my name. They asked to see my voter card. Then, they kept shuffling me from one person to another. I went to three different people and finally I got to my precinct and I recognized the voice of one of the precinct people and she said, *“Well, your name is not on my list. You can't vote here.”* Then she sent me to talk to somebody else. After a half of an hour of running taxi meter, I said, *“this is going nowhere.”*

I told each person, *“All I want is to have you let me use the voting machine.”* And two or three of them said, *“I don't even think it works, I don't know why it is here.”* So I never got to use it. After waiting half an hour, I decided that I couldn't afford to pay the taxi to keep waiting. I asked the driver if he could either turn off the meter or take me home. He said, *“I'll take you home.”* So I left. Then I called Cleo at the Library Equal Access Program (LEAP). She was my reader after work which means I had to leave work early to get down there to get my ballot in the mail before the last postal pickup at 7:00 p.m. I will continue working with Cleo to fill out my ballots henceforth. I'm not interested in your runaround with your mechanical device...If I had planned to take the whole day and told the cab driver to drop me off and I'll call another cab later, that would have been different. If I had expected that and planned to do a sit in until I got to use the contraption, [but] I hadn't planned on that.

Rhonda’s Story:

I went into my polling place with my absentee ballot because I was on the regular absentee ballot roll. The first person said, *‘What are you going to do with that?’* I said I brought it to show that I'm not going to double vote. I told them I understood I could cast a provisional ballot because I want to be able to use the Accessible Technology. That person sent me over to the provisional ballot person who started filling out some paper work and decided that was really not where I belonged and sent me over to someone else. At any rate, the head person finally said, *‘How do you normally do this?’* I replied that I normally have someone fill out my absentee ballot for me and he said that that would be the best way. But he had called someone about how to do it. Apparently, it came down to the fact that there was some coding that they had to do on the card. I didn't really understand exactly what it was...Because I was not on the regular list, they didn't think they could [have me use the accessible voting machine]...I felt like they were really flummoxed about what to do with me. Once they determined I had an absentee ballot and they thought I had someone else to help me with it, it made it easier for them. When in fact, I did not have anyone available to help me that particular day that I felt I could call and inconvenience. So, ultimately, I was not able to vote. They told me to use the AVU I would have to re-register and not request an absentee ballot ...I can't believe that I'm the only person receiving absentee ballots [who wanted to vote on the AVU] because for a lot of us that is an easier way to vote.

People were also asked specifically about their thoughts on the demonstrations done through this project. Given that Alliance's Voting Outreach Coordinator and Interim Co-Director were present, it was not the ideal set-up for unbiased comments. At the same time, most people said they felt much more likely to use the machine having gone through training and appreciated the work that was done:

"The demonstration was great. It made me want to use the equipment for the first time."
~Rhonda

"A lot of people [at the Lighthouse] said that they never really had tried [the AVU] before and that having tried it they really felt much better about using it. Some people had some sense that it would be really tricky or maybe it would be like a computer that they might have difficulty with...So, the demonstration was important...And, being able to try it individually without anybody listening to how long it took you to go through the ballot, I think was really an empowering thing to people" ~ "Eva"

"The work that Deb did with us really made a difference. I was extremely familiar with what I needed to do [on the AVU]. I knew what buttons I needed to push to go back and forth... When I think if I had just gone in there not having any training whatsoever, it would have been very complicated to try to remember all that and then to remember everything on the ballot..." ~ "Sarah"

"I've used the machine once before in 2006 and I made it through then but I didn't necessarily remember the ins and outs of it. Having the demonstration gave me a refresher on how the machine worked and gave me a degree of confidence that I could get to voting with a minimal of hassles and without being concerned that I wasn't going to be able to figure out how to vote." ~Tim

"Deb was really patient working with everyone and explained it very well... A lot of people understand things but they don't understand how to explain it in a way that makes it simple and understandable. And I felt like she did. When I talked to some of the people here who attended [the training], they said they understood quite well. A lot of times, particularly with people who are blind and visually impaired you get a visual picture of what is being said to you. If people can't explain [it in a way] that makes a visual picture for you, it can be a lot more confusing than it needs to be..." ~ "Sarah"

Many specific suggestions were shared related to accessibility in voting and the AVU. Those have been incorporated with other ideas provided by community members throughout this project. This combined list of ideas is included below:

Suggestions specific to the AVU:

- Have an anti-glare screen (easier on the eyes)
- Have the option to reverse text/background colors, so that the screen could be black with white lettering or white with black lettering). A reversed screen is easier for some people to read.
- Add zoom text capabilities as 20 point font was not large enough for many people to read
- Use bold characters which can be helpful for people with limited vision (some places also recommend against use of bold for accessibility reasons – there are cases for either way)
- Increase text size on keypad
- Add Braille to the keypad
- Have the AVU print out in Braille how someone voted so that people who only read Braille may verify the “paper trail” in the same manner that others can. Ideally, it was recommended that there be a Braille print-out that you could take with you as a receipt.
- Improve the set-up for write-in candidates. This could be done by:
 - Adding a keyboard attachment for write-in candidates
 - Making the directions for write-in candidates and the keypad more clear and concise
 - Adding the ability to pause the speaker: As one AVU tester stated, there is “too much talking when you need to think how to spell a write-in candidate’s name and also think where the letter is located on the keypad.”
 - Adding instruction for how to accept a write-in candidate (King County). It does not specify that people need to press zero again to accept the entirety of what they wrote (in addition to pressing zero to accept each letter).
- Add the ability to use a refreshable Braille display with the AVU (an electronic-driven system that “prints” in Braille onto a refreshing keyboard what is written on a screen). This could be of benefit to the Deaf-Blind community.
- Make the AVU more user friendly for people with limited hand-strength and/or tremors. Some people did not have the hand strength to push the buttons on the keypad. Others with tremors had difficulty honing in on touch screen fields. This could be improved by:
 - Increasing the size of the buttons on the keypad. (e.g. 1” x 1”)
 - Inverting the keypad and adding a raised border.
 - For the King County AVU, adding puff and sip capacity.
- Provide a method of disinfecting the keypad and touch screen after each voter’s usage. This was important to people with compromised immune systems.
- Have poll workers inform people that the AVU can be lowered so they can sit down and use it, particularly since it can take a long time to complete an audio ballot. Or, have it automatically set in the lower position with a chair next to it (that could be moved if someone was in a wheelchair).

- Have the AVU confirm or remind you at the end of each section how you voted for that section before moving forward.
- Have a button you can push that will tell you for any specific ballot item you are on, what the ballot item is, if you have voted, and how you voted. The discussion leading to this suggestion (and the one above) related to how some people lost track of where they were on the audio ballot and if they had already voted on a specific section.
- Provide better headphones for the AVU because on Election Day some people found that the pads were tearing off the headphones and they were a little uncomfortable to wear.
- Ensure uniform training of poll workers on the AVU. One positive thing found about fewer locations for voting was that there would be fewer poll workers and, perhaps, they could receive more intensive training.
- Allow a brief period of time after inserting the voting card on the AVU for someone to adjust the speed and volume settings before beginning the official voting instructions. Otherwise, if one is trying to become oriented and make these adjustments, it is easy to become stuck in that first stage and the AVU doesn't repeat instructions for how to move beyond it. That happened to one of the focus group participants on Election Day.
- Have the same person's voice throughout the whole ballot.
- Have re-fresher training on the AVU available before every major election.

General Suggestions on Voting Accessibility

- Have additional regional voting centers in King County. Recommendations included central locations where there are large disability populations living and/or working nearby (e.g. Center Park or Lighthouse for the Blind) or governmental office locations such as the Department of Services for the Blind. Center Park was the preferred suggestion, as it has been a polling location, has a large accessible meeting room, has people with a range of disabilities already living there (132 apartments), and would be across the street from the Lighthouse for the Blind where 200 visually-impaired people work. There was a concern that with the switch to three voting centers for the AVU, less people would be able to use them: "It is going to be a real barrier to use [the AVU] if people have to go [farther away]. Transportation is always an issue for people with visual impairment" and other disabilities. The concern then was that it would lead policymakers to think they were not needed and to further cutting of the program. Final result being that people would be back to not being able to vote an independent ballot.
- Have extended hours at regional voting centers for people who have to go use them before or after work. It was still a concern, though, that if people with disabilities had to go after work, they may not use the machine. According to local disability service provider, "I often plan things for people who are blind and visually-impaired people during day time and people are just more apt to do it. And that is why [Center Park] would be a great place to have it." She felt at Center Park, the large low-vision and blind community in that area could go vote during the day (e.g. for those working at Lighthouse, they could vote during their lunch break).

- Ensure good publicity about the specific addresses of King County's three regional voting centers, dates and times they are open, what you need to have with you, etc. Include in any advertising of the election the availability of the AVUs at these locations.
- Make large-print and Braille mail-in ballots available that people can complete at home. For the Braille ballots, standard print would also need to be added so that people who do not read Braille could verify how the person had voted. Some people liked this idea – others had concerns. One person question if Braille dots could be impacted so as to change how someone reads their ballot – others felt this would not be an issue. Another concern was you wouldn't be able to see and correct your own mistakes, if you made them.
- Make available either online voting or voting by phone with a menu just like the voting machine. Focus group members suggested this could help with transportation issues.
- Members of the deaf-blind community have strong ongoing concerns that there are obstacles hindering them from voting. Suggestions for making voting more accessible to that community, included:
 - Have certain timeframes (days, weeks) during early voting that ASL tactile interpreters could be available to assist with AVUs.
 - Have a travelling AVU with accompanying interpreter(s), as it can be more difficult for people who are deaf/blind to travel throughout the county to a regional voting center. A traveling AVU was thought to be a good strategy by people with other types of disabilities, as well.
 - Other suggestions specific to the AVU are listed above.
- In King County, coordinate with Center Park, which has an accessible bus, to take people to the regional voting centers.
- Keep sending the taped voter's pamphlets – they are "great!"

Final Thoughts

Significant improvements to the elections system in King and Snohomish County have made it possible for thousands of people with disabilities to achieve independence in voting. With that, has come a sense of true inclusion in our country's democracy. Having demonstrations of the machine available has been a key part of increasing accessibility within the voting process:

"For you all to provide that training for people around the county, I think that made a lot of difference for people. Accessibility is not just about being able to have something [available] in audio. Accessibility crosses a lot of different levels – how you use it, where you use it. If you've been trained on it, do the people training you know how to use it...For the most part you all really hit it on the mark." ~ "Sarah"

When the AVUs were first debuted in King County in 2006, 14,795 votes were cast on them. An additional 6,371 people used the AVUs in 2008 (a total 21,166 were cast on it). This is a significant improvement and hopefully future efforts can connect even more people with the wonderful opportunity represented by this technology. Through the AVU and other options made available by the King and Snohomish County Elections offices (e.g. ballot drop boxes, early voting), a greater level of equality has been achieved for people with disabilities.

"The AVU enables me to participate in one of our most precious privileges and responsibilities we have and it lets me do it independently...I have friends or family that will help me [vote] and I trust them to vote the way I want to vote but nevertheless, they're doing the voting. Whereas, when I get on the voting machine, I'm voting. I'm hearing the ballot. I'm listening to the candidates. I'm making the choices. And in the end, I'm the one that finally says, 'Yes, this is my ballot. This is what I want. Submit it'. I get to participate independently in the election which is important as a citizen." ~Tim

*Some names have been changed to protect people's identifies. Those names appear in quotation marks.

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List of Attachments

Attachment A:	Email announcement of AVU outreach effort
Attachment B:	AVU FAQ flyer
Attachment C:	High Contrast Version of AVU FAQ flyer
Attachment D:	AVU FAQ flyer - Braille
Attachment E:	AVU FAQ large print
Attachment F:	Ballot Drop Box FAQ flyer
Attachment G:	Ballot Drop Box Location flyer
Attachment H:	Mailing sent to those on Alliance Mailing List
Attachment I:	Voting reminder script used by staff and volunteers leading up to Election Day
Attachment J:	Email notice reminding people to vote
Attachment K:	Email notice regarding free rides to the polls
Attachment L:	Question list from focus groups and interviews
Attachment M:	Alliance web pages with voting information
Attachment N:	Bus Advertising
Attachment O:	Project Budget